

## **FYWS151-03—Telling Contemporary Secrets**

**Professor Amanda Dykema**

**Fall 2014 – MW 11-11:50am—Barrett 214**

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**Office: Palmer Hall 309B**

**Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 2-3pm; Thursday, 11am-12pm; & by appointment**

**Writing Fellow: Tom Simmermaker**

### **Required Texts & Materials:**

The following texts have been ordered at the Rhodes Bookstore and are also available online. Please purchase the editions ordered. Please also note that there will be additional important readings, all available for download at our course Moodle site ([moodle.rhodes.edu](http://moodle.rhodes.edu)).

Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say/I Say*. Norton. ISBN: 978-0393935844

Bechdel, Alison. *Fun Home*. Mariner. ISBN: 978-0618871711

Lee, Chang-rae. *Native Speaker*. Riverhead. ISBN: 978-1573225311

### **Course Objectives:**

In this writing seminar, we will consider the significance of secrets—for instance, about sex, surveillance, or the state—in contemporary American culture. Analyzing genres like the memoir, controversies like the NSA domestic spying program, and literary works like Chang-rae Lee's *Native Speaker*, this course explores how secrets are maintained or disclosed, and what such secrets reveal about life in the present-day United States. What role do secrets play in determining who belongs to families, ethnic communities, and the nation? What do representations of secrecy suggest about contemporary understandings of memory, betrayal, and security?

Under the Rhodes College Foundations curriculum, this course satisfies the F2 requirement. This means that our official learning outcomes center on developing excellence in written communication. In more concrete terms, this course is designed to facilitate your identification and examination of rhetorical strategies in others' texts and the employment of rhetorical strategies in your own written work. We will devote our efforts to analyzing written arguments critically, discussing specific writing skills and strategies, and developing those skills in your own writing. By the end of the course, you will be able to write a clear, well-developed, supported argument; to express complex ideas in clear and effective prose; to summarize, extrapolate, and synthesize material from a variety of sources with appropriate documentation; and to assess and revise your own drafts.

### **Course Policies & Requirements**

A college course is more than simply a set of assignments; it is an intellectual process, one which requires active engagement from beginning to end in order to achieve its intended results. The policies and expectations described below are formulated with this in mind.

*Papers.* You will write four papers over the course of the semester: one shorter analysis (approximately 3 pages), an annotated bibliography, a longer research paper (at least 7 pages) and a literary analysis essay (5-6 pages). I will provide specific assignment sheets to explain each essay in greater detail. For each paper, you will be responsible for turning in a topic proposal, a "rough" draft, a draft for workshop, and a final draft. (The due dates for each of these required pieces are listed on the calendar.) We will be reading and workshopping these drafts together, so it is essential that you have a printed copy of your draft (or multiple copies, on workshop days) with you at the beginning of class. If you do not have a copy of your proposal or draft on the day it is due, you will miss valuable feedback from your peers, your writing fellow, and from me. **All documents are due at the beginning of class on the date listed on the syllabus.** Please note that technology failure is not an acceptable excuse for late work; make sure to save your drafts frequently and back up your work. Unless alternate arrangements are made with me before the due date, late papers will lose one grade increment (ex. B to B-, C+ to C) per day.

*Revision Opportunities.* Revision is essential to the writing process, and this course will offer opportunities to revise frequently based on peer feedback, suggestions from your writing fellow, and comments from me. I expect that paper drafts will be revised after each workshop or set of comments (from the Writing Fellow or from me). The opportunity to formally revise a paper of your choosing has been built into our course calendar and will take place at the end of the semester in a class-wide workshop (details to follow). Please note: all official drafts, including the versions with comments from me or your Writing Fellow, are required to be turned in with finished essays, so take care to keep track of these documents. Finally, I strongly encourage all students to visit the Rhodes Writing Center. Information about the Writing Center can be found at: <http://www.rhodes.edu/writingcenter/>.

*Submitting work.* All out of class work for this course should be **typed** and submitted in **hard-copy form** (not email) unless you are otherwise instructed. Formal essays must use correct MLA format (title, page numbers, 1-inch margins, 11 or 12 point Times New Roman or Calibri font, etc.). All major assignments are integral to the goals of the course. Failure to complete any major paper will result in a grade of F for the course.

*Grade Distribution.* Papers will be graded for originality, clarity of purpose and audience, organization, polish, and completion of all process work. We will discuss these criteria in greater depth during the course. Your grade in this course will be determined out of 1000 possible points.

Participation/Workshops	150
Homework/Short Writings	150
Analysis Paper	100
Annotated Bibliography	150
Research Paper	250
<u>Literary Analysis</u>	<u>200</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1000</b>

(A: 930-1000, A-: 900-929, B+: 880-899, B: 830-879, B-: 800-829, C+: 780-799, C: 730-779, C-: 700-729, D+: 680-699, D: 630-679, D-: 600-629, F: 500 or below)

*Reading and Class Participation.* Reading and writing are inextricably linked. I have carefully chosen readings from the texts (as well as occasional outside readings) to both prepare you for your own writing and to reinforce what we are discussing in class. For almost every class that you have a reading assignment, expect a short assignment based on that reading. You are expected to come to class prepared for discussion, which means reading the assigned text carefully and marking significant pages/paragraphs before class so you can contribute to the discussion using specific textual evidence (quotes, references to specific page numbers, etc.). Please **bring your copy of the assigned text** to every class. If there is a reading assigned from Moodle, you should print it and bring it to class as well. Participating and listening carefully to your classmates on a regular basis should help you strengthen your ability to develop and support an argument about a text, skills you will need to succeed on the papers.

*Conferences.* You may have conferences with our class Writing Fellow over the course of the semester. I will also meet with each of you individually for a required conference. During our conference, we will work through your most recent research paper draft and I will offer some suggestions for further revision. This is also an opportunity for you to ask questions and reveal any concerns. Remember, you are always welcome to schedule additional conferences with me if you would like to meet outside of class.

*Workshops.* You should be prepared to share your writing frequently in this class. In my experience, workshops are the best way to improve your writing—you receive feedback from others, you read your own work with a fresh eye, and you have the opportunity to see what others are producing for the same assignment. For each paper you write, we will be conducting some kind of writing workshop, either in groups or as a full class. In order for these workshops to be effective, everyone must: 1) come to class on time with the required number of completed drafts, and 2) make a conscientious effort to respond

thoroughly to the work of others. I take these workshops very seriously; if you fail to do either of these things, your workshop participation points will fall significantly.

*Attendance.* Please come to class on time. Regular attendance and class participation are essential for this course. In general, I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. Each absence after the fourth class missed will lower your final course grade by 50 points (half a letter grade). Students with college-sanctioned extracurricular activities (athletics, mock trial, etc.) or religious observances that will require them to miss one or more classes during the semester should talk to me in advance of their anticipated absence. All such absences that are not approved in advance will adversely affect your grade.

*Courtesy.* Please be respectful of everyone's opinions, presence, and person in this course. A primary purpose of this class is to give you the opportunity to practice developing interpretations of the texts, and while you are encouraged to offer differing ideas, you should do so in a thoughtful manner. Further, I am committed to creating an academic climate that is safe, respectful, and appreciative of all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic background, ability, religion, or any other aspect of one's identity. A climate of mutual respect allows us to ask difficult questions and to participate in honest discussions, even in the context of strong disagreement. Creating this kind of open, honest, and respectful climate is our mutual responsibility.

*Technology.* **Turn off cell phones** and other electronic devices before class. I expect that computers will be used only for class-related work. Get in the habit of regularly checking your email, as I will send out announcements and assignments this way. Email is also the best way to contact me (though please give me up to 24 hours to respond). Depending on your question, I may recommend that we discuss it in person. Please also regularly consult our course space on Moodle at [www.moodle.rhodes.edu](http://www.moodle.rhodes.edu). Moodle will enable you to view the syllabus, access assignments and other course materials, and communicate with me and your classmates.

*Intellectual Honesty.* All work turned in for this course is to be completed in accordance with Rhodes' Honor Code; it must be your own work, produced exclusively for this course. Plagiarism is a violation of the integrity of the occupation of learning and a serious act of disrespect toward me as professor and toward your fellow students. "Plagiarism" means directly copying someone else's work, paraphrasing someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit, or having someone else do your work for you. (Because of this, students are advised against posting their work on the internet and advised to maintain drafts of their work to verify its originality.) Cases of suspected plagiarism will be referred to the Honor Council, and the student if convicted will receive a grade of F in the course in addition to sanctions assigned by the Council. Clear evidence of plagiarism (failure to use quotation marks around copied language, failure to adequately paraphrase, failure to cite the source of quoted/paraphrased/borrowed text and ideas) may likewise result in failure of the course, regardless of the Council hearing outcome. Carelessness in documenting sources, even if not intentional plagiarism, will be penalized as I deem appropriate. If you have any concerns that your actions might violate this course's academic integrity policies, speak with me early in the assignment for help and clarification.

*Special needs.* If you have a registered disability that will require accommodations, please see me within the first two weeks of class so we can arrange for the resources you need. If you have a disability and have not yet registered with the Office of Student Disability Services, you should do so immediately (901-843-3885, <http://www.rhodes.edu/disabilityservices/>)

## Course Calendar

Readings should be completed by the day on which they are listed. This calendar may be subject to change during the course; all changes will be announced in class and via Moodle. Readings marked (M) can be accessed on Moodle at moodle.rhodes.edu

### AUGUST

**Wed 27** Class Introduction/Syllabus Overview  
Contemporary Secrets (Post Secret)

**Fri 29** Rhetorical Situations & Appeals  
*Fun Home* Chapter 1  
Homework: *Fun Home* writing

### SEPTEMBER

**Mon 1** **Labor Day – No Class**

**Wed 3** *Fun Home* Chapters 2 & 3  
Bechdel Interview from *MFS* (M)  
HW: Rhetorical appeals in Bechdel interview

**Fri 5** *Fun Home* Chapter 4  
Visual and Rhetorical Analysis/Notice & Focus  
Assign Paper 1

**Mon 8** *Fun Home* Chapters 5 & 6  
**Topic Proposal Due—Paper 1**

**Wed 10** *Fun Home* Chapter 7  
Crafting a Strong Thesis

**Fri 12** Workshop: Paper 1

**Mon 15** **Paper 1 Due**  
Edward Snowden & the NSA Introduction  
Laura Poitras' "The Program" (In Class)

**Wed 17** Edward Snowden & the NSA  
Snowden *Vanity Fair* article (M)

**Fri 19** Generating Research Questions  
Greenwald *Guardian* article on NSA/Verizon (M)  
Introduce Research Project

**Mon 22** Library Research Intro  
Read *They Say, I Say* – "Entering the Conversation" pp. 1-14

**Wed 24** **Topic Proposal Due—Research Project**  
Assign Annotated Bibliography & Exploratory Journal

**Fri 26** *They Say, I Say* – "They Say," "Her Point Is" pp. 19-41

**Mon 29 Exploratory Journal Due**  
MLA Format

**OCTOBER**

**Wed 1** Edward Snowden & the NSA  
Annotated Bibliography Rough Draft (1 source) due to Writing Fellow

**Fri 3** Edward Snowden & the NSA: One Year Later  
*The Wired* Interview with Snowden (M)

**Mon 6** Workshop: Annotated Bibliography

**Wed 8** Edward Snowden & the NSA  
**Annotated Bibliography Due**  
Assign Researched Position Paper

**Fri 10 Presentations: One Source from AB—Group 1**  
*They Say, I Say*—“Three Ways to Respond” pp. 55-67

**Mon 13 Presentations: One Source from AB—Group 2**

**Wed 15** Incorporating Sources into Your Writing  
HW: Two Page Draft of Research Paper Due in Class

**Fri 17** Incorporating Sources into Your Writing  
HW: Researched Position Paper Draft for WF

**Mon 20 Fall Break—No Class**

**Wed 22** Planting a Naysayer  
*They Say, I Say*—“Skeptics May Object” pp. 78-90

**Fri 24** WF returns drafts  
Assign Position Journal (1 source)

**Mon 27** Conferences w/ Prof. Dykema – bring paper draft

**Wed 29** Conferences w/ Prof. Dykema – bring paper draft

**Fri 31 Researched Position Paper Due**  
Reading & Writing About Literature

**NOVEMBER**

**Mon 3** *Native Speaker* pp. 1-8

**Wed 5** *Native Speaker* pp. 9-46

**Fri 7** *Native Speaker* pp. 47-81  
HW: Position Journal Due

**Mon 10** *Native Speaker* pp. 82-171  
Assign Literary Analysis

<b>Wed</b>	<b>12</b>	<i>Native Speaker</i> pp. 172-230
<b>Fri</b>	<b>14</b>	<i>Native Speaker</i> pp. 231-292
<b>Mon</b>	<b>17</b>	<i>Native Speaker</i> pp. 293-end <b>Topic Proposal Due – Literary Analysis</b>
<b>Wed</b>	<b>19</b>	<i>Native Speaker</i> Controversy <i>New York Times</i> article – One Book, One City ( <b>M</b> )
<b>Fri</b>	<b>21</b>	Workshop: Literary Analysis
<b>Mon</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>Literary Analysis Due</b> Final discussion of <i>Native Speaker</i>
<b>Wed</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>No Class – Thanksgiving Recess</b>
<b>Fri</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>No Class – Thanksgiving Recess</b>
<b>DECEMBER</b>		
<b>Mon</b>	<b>1</b>	Class-wide Workshop
<b>Wed</b>	<b>3</b>	Class-wide Workshop
<b>Fri</b>	<b>5</b>	Class-wide Workshop
<b>Mon</b>	<b>8</b>	Class-wide Workshop
<b>Wed</b>	<b>10</b>	Class-wide Workshop
<b>Final Exam</b>		<b>Friday Dec. 12 1p.m.</b> <b>Revision Due (essay of your choice)</b>